

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-07 SCA-01 SS-20 SY-10 ABF-01

PER-05 VO-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 EB-11 COME-00 USIA-15

MMS-03 CU-04 /094 W

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R 231235Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5514

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 1484

FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRAD, CVIS, IR

SUBJ: TRADE, TOURISM AND OUR CONSULAR SECTION

REF: A. STATE 21246 B. STATE 239800, DEC 8, 1973 C. A-9600, NOV
21, 1973 D. USIA CIRC CM 1964, OCT 11, 1973 E. USIA CIRC CM 2083,
OCT 31, 1973

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE POINTS OUT THE INTERRALATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
CONSULAR SERVICES AND EFFORTS OF USG TO PROMOTE TOURISM AND TRAVEL
TO THE US; IT DESCRIBES THE PARLOUS STATE OF OUR CONSULAR RESOURCES
AT THIS POST AND URGES THESE BE STRENGTHENS SO THAT WE CAN DO OUR
SHARE TO PROMOTE TRAVEL TO US BY INCREASINGLY AFFLUENT IRANIANS.
ACTION REQUESTED: COORDINATED EFFORTY BY THOSE AGENCIES OF USG
CURRENTLY PROMOTING TOURISM AND TRAVEL TO US (STATE, COMMERCE,
USIA) TO STRENGTHEN OUR CONSULAR SERVICES AT THIS POST BY ADDITION
OF TWO TEMPORARY POSITIONS DURING SUMMER MONTHS ANNUALLY AND OF
TWO PERMANENT AMERICAN POSITIONS. END SUMMARY

2. "TRAVEL...IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR NATIONAL FINANCIAL
PICTURE," VICE PRESIDENT FORD, JANUARY 10, 1974.

3. REF A ON POLICIES AND WORKING GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE NON-
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IMMIGRATION VISA OPERATIONS ARRIVED AT MOST OPPORTUNE TIME AS WE

ARE NOW REVIEWING RESOURCES AT POST TO DEAL WITH SISYPHEAN BURDEN WHICH OUR CONSULAR SECTION WILL AGAIN BE FACED IN MONTHS AHEAD, AND ESPECIALLY DURING SUMMER. PROBLEM WILL BE AGGRAVATED THIS YEAR BECAUSE AT SAME TIME AS WE ARE EXPECTING OUR CONSULAGHSECTION TO COPE WITH EVER-INCREASING AMOUNT OF BUSINESS, WE ARE ALSO ASKED TO SUPPORT PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES OF DEPTS OF STATE, COMMERCE AND USIA TO ENCOURAGE FOREIGNERS TO VISIT US AS TOURISTS AND BUSINESS-MENT.

4. WE WELCOME OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED BY REF A TO COMMENT ON THIS SITUATION WHICH HIGHLIGHTS INHERENT CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN USG WHICH COME ABOUT BECAUSE SOME AGENCIES SUCH AS STATE, COMMERCE AND USIA ARE UNDERSTANDABLY SEEKING TO PROMOTE TRADE AND TOURISM AND REDRESS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, WHILE OTHERS ARE NEGLECTING OR CHOKING OFF SUPPORT FOR CONSULAR FUNCTIONS WHICH ARE INDISPENSABLE ELEMENT IN THIS PROMOTIONAL EFFORT. IF SITUATION IN TEHRAN IS NOT REMEDIED, OUR CONSULAR SECTION WILL TURN FROM EMBARRASSING INTO HUMILIATING BOTTLENECK AND MANY OF US HERE WILL THINK TWICE BEFORE SUGGESTING THAT IRANIANS GO THERE TO GET A VISA. THIS IS AN EASY WAY TO LOSE FRIENDS. IN FACT, OUR CONSULAR SECTION PROBABLY LOSES MORE FRIENDS IN ONE DAY THAN USIS WITH GREAT EFFORT CAN MAKE IN SEVERAL MONTHS. SOMEHOW WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANT LINK BETWEEN OUR CONSULAR OPERATIONS AND OUR TRADE PROMOTIONAL AND USIS EFFORTS OVERSEAS.

5. AS WE SEE IT, FIRST REQUIREMENT TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES SET FORTH IN REFS B, D, AND E IS TO HAVE A CONSULAR OFFICE OF WHICH USG SHOULD BE PROUD AND WHICH IS STAFFED AND EQUIPPED TO PROVIDE PROSPECTIVE TOURISTS AND BUSINESSMEN WITH SERVICES WHICH BESPEAK AMERICAN HOSPITALITY AND EFFICIENCY. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES CURRENTLY PREVAILING HERE THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE. OUR CONSULAR OPERATION IS, FRANKLY, A DISGRACE THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS STAFF. IT IS INCREAS-
INGLY THE SUBJECT OF UNFAVORABLE COMMENT IN A COUNTRY WHERE WE HAVE MANY FRIENDS WHO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE US AND DO NOT UNDER-
STAND HOW WE CAN ACCORD SECOND CLASS STATUS TO THE ONE ELEMENT OF THE USG WHICH HAS CONTACT ON DAILY BASIS WITH MANY MORE IRANIANS THAN ANY OTHER ELEMENT OF THE MISSION. FOR MANY THIS REPRESENTS FIRST CONTACT WITH USG AND IMPRESSION WE GIVE ABOUT US IS NOT ONE WHICH GIVES US ANY COMFORT.

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6. THERE IS HARDLY NEED TO REMIND DEPT THAT IRAN IS INCREASINGLY AFFLUENT COUNTRY WHICH CAN WELL FINANCE VIRTUALLY INSATIABLE IRANIAN DESIRE TO VISIT AND STUDY IN US. RISING OIL PRICES WILL ALSO MAKE POSSIBLE NUMEROUS NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN TRADE AND COMMERCE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. OF THE THIRTY TO FORTY THOUSAND IRANIAN STUDENTS OVERSEAS, WE ESTIMATE THAT ABOUT HALF ARE IN US. THERE ARE MANY THOUSANDS MORE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE THERE, TO SAY NOTHING OF IRANIANS INTERESTED IN VISITING US AS TOURISTS OR FOR BUSINESS

PURPOSES.

7. UNFORTUNATELY THIS INCREASED DEMAND TO VISIT US COMES AT A TIME WHEN OUR CONSULAR SECTION SIMPLY CANNOT COPE IN SPITE OF EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SITUATION. STEPS WE HAVE TAKEN INCLUDE: (A) WE HAVE ALREADY ADOPTED VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE PROPOSALS AND GUIDELINES IN REF A THAT ARE RELEVANT TO LOCAL CONDITIONS; (B) EMBASSY FROM ITS OWN LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES HAS IMPROVED PHYSICAL SETUP; (C) DURING PEAK HOURS, ESPECIALLY IN SUMMER MONTHS, WE HAVE SUPPLEMENTED CONSULAR STAFF WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OFFICERS WHO REALLY CANNOT BE SPARED FROM THEIR OWN WORK; (D) POLITICAL SECTION HAS TAKEN ON SOME OF THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE TRIPS WHICH NORMALLY ARE JOB OF CONSULAR SECTION.

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ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 PM-07 SS-20 SY-10 ABF-01

PER-05 VO-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 EB-11 COME-00 USIA-15

MMS-03 CU-04 /094 W

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R 231235Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5515

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 1484

FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRAD, CVIS, IR

SUBJ: TRADE, TOURISM AND OUR CONSULAR SECTION

8. GIVEN THIS UNHAPPY STATE OF AFFAIRS, HOW HAVE WE MANAGED SO FAR? BASICALLY BY GREATER EFFICIENCY, LONGER HOURS, HELP FROM OTHER SECTIONS AND BUREAUCRATIC TECHNIQUES WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR QUALITY OR THE HUMAN FACTOR. HOWEVER, ONE REACHES A POINT WHERE ADDITIONAL WORKLOAD CAN ONLY BE ABSORBED AT RISK OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR HIGHLY-DEDICATED JUNIOR OFFICERS WHO ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR

CONSULAR SECTION AND WHO SPEND LONG HOURS OF UNCOMPENSATED OVERTIME TRYING TO KEEP ABREAST OF DEMAND. WE CANNOT ASK MORE FROM THEM NOR CAN WE EXPECT OTHER SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY CONSTANTLY TO COME TO RESCUE OF CONSULAR SECTION.

9. A FEW STATISTICS MAY HELP MAKE THE POINT. THE SAME COMPLEMENT OF ONE AND ONE-HALF OFFICERS WHO PROCESSED 7,714 NIV'S IN FY 1969 PROCESSED 17,831 SUCH CASES IN FY 1973. BETWEEN JULY AND DECEMBER 1972 AND THE SAME PERIOD IN 1973, NIV BUSINESS INCREASED 18 PERCENT, AND WE ESTIMATE AN ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF 25 PERCENT.

10. HOWEVER, THESE STATISTICS ILLUSTRATE ONLY PART OF PROBLEM SINCE NIV WORK NOW INVOLVES NEW TIME-CONSUMING QUALITATIVE PROBLIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LEMS INCLUDING ADDED EMPHASIS WHICH CURRENTLY MUST BE GIVEN TO SCREENING OUT SO-CALLED TOURISTS ANSSUNQUALIFIED STUDENTS WHO INTEND TO WORK ILLEGALLY OR STAY INDEFINITELY IN THE US (TEHRAN IS WELL-KNOWN AS "HIGH-RISK" IN THIS RESPECT). RESULTS OF ALL THIS ARE OVERBURDENED CONSULAR STAFF, LONG QUEUES OF APPLICANTS WHO HAVE TO WAIT UP TO THREE WEEKS FOR VISA INTERVIEW APPOINTMENTS. CONFUSION, HARRASSMENT, FRAYED NERVES, ANGRY APPLICANTS, HOSTILE PRESS COMMENT, COMPLAINTS FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT EMBASSY ARE ALL PART OF THE PICTURE.

11. WHILE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO ADDITIONAL TOURIST OR BUSINESS EARNINGS, DEMANDS PLACED ON CONSULAR SECTION BY GROWING AMERICAN COMMUNITY ARE ALSO PART OF OVERALL MANPOWER PROBLEM WHICH SECTION FACES. AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN TEHRAN IS GROWING RAPIDLY AND ONE OFFICER WHO DEALT WITH 6,000 AMERICANS IN TEHRAN SEVERAL YEARS AGO MUST NOW COPE WITH PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF THE PRESENCE HERE OF CLOSE TO 12,000. IN ADDITION, LARGE COMMERCIAL AND MILITARY CONTRACTS BETWEEN IRAN AND US COMPANIES CALL FOR ASSIGNMENT HERE OF LARGE NUMBER OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS WITH THEIR FAMILIES. FOR EXAMPLE, AMERICAN POPULATION IN ISFAHAN WHICH TOTALED HANDFUL YEAR AGO WILL APPROXIMATE 1,500 IN SUMMER OF 1974. THEY EXPECT AND DEMAND NORMAL CONSULAR SERVICES WHICH ARE COMPOUNDED BY SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM IMPACT ON RATHER ORTHODOX ISFAHAN COMMUNITY OF LARGE NUMBER OF AMERICANS, MANY OF WHOM ARE EXPERIENCING CULTURAL SHOCK. INCREASE IN SPECIAL CONSULAR SERVICES IN 1973 OVER 1972 IS 27 PERCENT AND CITIZENSHIP SERVICES IN THE SAME PERIOD INCREASED 30 PERCENT.

12. WE CONCLUDE THAT POINT OF NO RETURN HAS BEEN REACHED DESPITE COUNTLESS HOURS OF SO-CALLED OVERTIME AND EMBASSY BACKING TO RELIEVE CONSULAR SECTION'S PLIGHT. SITUATION CANNOT BE REMEDIED WITHOUT ADDITIONAL MANPOWER. WE NEED 2 TEMPORARY CLERICAL POSITIONS EACH SUMMER FROM APRIL 15 TO OCTOBER 15 TO TAKE CARE OF SEASONALLY INCREASED WORKLOAD, AS WELL AS TWO PERMANENT AMERICAN POSITONS, ONE OFFICER AND ONE CLERICAL, BEFORE BEGINNING NEXT RUSH SEASON

IN MAY-JUNE 1974. THIS IS NOT NEW REQUEST. IN TEHRAN 2135, APRIL 5, 1973, WE REQUESTED ADDITIONAL POSITIONS FOR CONSULAR SECTION. OUR REQUEST WAS SUPPORTED BY VISITING OFFICERS OF DEPARTMENT WHO AGREED THAT WE NEEDED "AT LEAST ONE AMERICAN CONSULAR OFFICER" (TEHRAN 2824). OUR REQUEST WAS INCLUDED IN SECURITY PACKAGE FOR FY 74 (STATE 78358) SEVERAL MONTHS LATER WE WERE INFORMED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(STATE 170445) THAT POSITION WE WERE COUNTING ON WAS REMOVED BY DEPARTMENT BUT WOULD BE INCLUDED IN FY 75 BUDGET REQUEST. FRANKLY, WE CAN'T WAIT MUCH LONGER AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL, WE MIGHT AS WELL FORGET OUR PROMOTIONAL TOURIST AND BUSINESSMEN CAMPAIGN.

13. WE URGE SPEEDY CONSIDERATION OF OUR REQUEST FOR TWO TEMPORARY POSITIONS AND TWO ADDITIONAL PERMANENT AMERICAN CONSULAR POSITIONS ON GROUNDS THAT ADDITIONAL COST WILL BE MORE THAN OFFSET BY TOURIST AND OTHER EARNINGS IN US TO SAY NOTHING OF GOODWILL AND SATISFACTION GAINED BY ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EFFICIENT SERVICE-ORIENTED VISA OPERATION.
HELMS

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